

## Message Text

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FOR MELROSE IN A/O FROM GINGLES

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (FORD, GERALD)

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. SURCIN - THE BELGRADE AIRPORT. ON MAY 17, 1960, PRESIDENT JOSIP BROZ TITO LAID THE FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE MAIN TERMINAL BUILDING OF TH BELGRADE AIRPORT (SURCIN) WHICH WAS OPENED TWO YEARS LATER, ON APRIL 28, 1962. THE AIRPORT WAS DESIGNED BY A GROUP OF ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS HEADED BY MILOS LUKIC. SURCIN HAS A CONCRETE RUNWAY TWO MILES LONG AND 200 FEET WIDE WITH A CAPACITY OF 45 AIRCRAFT PER HOUR. THE AIRPORT IS LOCATED ABOUT 16 KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF BELGRADE IN THE VOJVODINA PLAINS. SURCIN WAS THE NAME OF A SMALL VILLAGE NEAR THE SITE OF THE PRESENT AIRPORT.

2. THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BUILDING. THE BUILDING OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BEGAN IN 1947, FOLLOWING A DESIGN BY THE LATE ARCHITECT POTOCNJAK OF ZAGREB. AFTER A PART OF THE REINFORCED CONCRETE SKELETON WAS CONSTRUCTED, WORK WAS DISCONTINUED IN 1948. THE CONSTRUCTION WAS RESUMED IN 1955 FOLLOWING A NEW DESIGN BY ARCHITECT MIKA JANOVIC OF BELGRADE, AND WAS COMPLETED AND FULLY FINISHED BY 1958. THE BUILDING CONTAINS ABOUT 1,000 OFFICES FOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE TOTAL AREA UNDER THE ROOF IS ABOUT 620,000 SQUARE FEET. IN ADDITION TO THE OFFICES, THERE IS ALSO A LARGE RECEPTION HALL TAKING UP AN UNCLASSIFIED

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AREA OF ABOUT 10,000 SQUARE FEET, AS WELL AS A SCORE OF

SMALLER RECEPTION AND CONFERENCE ROOMS. IN A SPECIAL AREA FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC IS A HALL FOR THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS BY FOREIGN AMBASSADORS. THE BIG RECEPTION HALL HAS A LARGE STAR-SHAPED CHANDELIER 56 FEET ACROSS, MADE FROM SMALL GLASS CRYSTALS IN VIENNA. THE BUILDING IS FACED WITH MARBLE AND WHITE STONE FROM THE ISLAND OF BRAC.

3. THE PARK OF FRIENDSHIP IN NEW BELGRADE. AT THE TIME OF THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES IN 1961, THE IDEA OF SETTING UP A "PARK OF FRIENDSHIP" WAS PROPOSED BY THE MOVEMENT OF YOUNG TREE LOVERS. THE PARK OF FRIENDSHIP WAS DESIGNED AS A PERMANENT SYMBOL OF FRIENDSHIP AMONG PEOPLES. WHAT IS CHARACTERISTIC ABOUT IT IS THAT MANY TREES IN IT HAVE BEEN PLANTED BY EMINENT PERSONALITIES FROM THE WHOLE WORLD WHO HAVE BEEN TO YUGOSLAVIA ON A FRIENDLY VISIT. THE PARK OF FRIENDSHIP IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND IS ONE OF THE LARGEST PARKS IN NEW BELGRADE. IT EXTENDS OVER AN AREA OF 35 ACRES AND CONTAINS MANY CULTURAL FACILITIES. AT THE MOMENT THE PARK OF FRIENDSHIP IS UNDER RECONSTRUCTION AND WHEN COMPLETED IT IS EXPECTED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFULLY ARRANGED PARKS IN THE CITY. THE TREE PLANTED BY PRESIDENT FORD WILL BE A PINE TREE. THE ONLY PREVIOUS U.S. PRESIDENT TO PLANT A TREE WAS RICHARD NIXON DURING HIS SEPTEMBER, 1970 VISIT.

4. AVALA. MT. AVALA (1,700 FT. HIGH), TEN MILES FROM BELGRADE, HAS BEEN KNOWN SINCE 1439 WHEN THE TURKS DURING THEIR SIEGE OF BELGRADE, BUILT A FORT ON IT. THE TV TOWER AT THE TOP OF AVALA OFFERS A VIEW OF BELGRADE, THE DANUBE, SMEDEREVO, THE MOUNTAINS OF JOSMAJ AND RUDNIK, AND THE ROLLING HILLS OF SUMADIJA, "THE HEART OF SERBIA".

MONUMENT TO THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER - AT THE VERY PEAK OF MT. AVALA STANDS THE MONUMENT TO THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER, ERECTED IN 1938 IN COMMEMORATION OF THE SOLDIERS FALLEN IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THE MONUMENT WAS DESIGNED BY THE GREATEST YUGOSLAV SCULPTOR, IVAN MESTROVIC (1883 - 1962) AND EXECUTED IN BLACK MARBLE FROM JABLANICA. THE MONUMENT TAKES UP AN AREA OF 7,000 SQUARE FEET. ITS MOST OUTSTANDING DETAILS ARE THE CARYATIDS WHICH REPRESENT TYPICAL FIGURES OF WOMEN IN FOLK COSTUMES FROM VARIOUS

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PARTS OF YUGOSLAVIA. EACH FIGURE IS HEWN OUT OF A SINGLE BLOCK OF GRANITE, WEIGHTS 15 TONS AND IS OVER 13 FEET TALL.

5. CITY HALL AND OLD PALACE TO FOLLOW WHEN AVAILABLE.  
SILBERMAN

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